

(10) [3.]
A Branch
OF
QUAKERISM
CUT OFF:
OR A
VINDICATION
OF

Our Common Custom of Naming the
Dayes and Months after their usual Names,
as well consistent with Scripture and sober Reason,
and the Quakers Opinion and Practice to
the contrary proved to be Preciseness above the
Rule, and their Zeal hereabout to be mistaken.

By J. C. *A sincere desirer of the Peace and Purity of all Christs People.*

Who for that end hath yielded himself to put to his helping
hand, to rid the Church of Quakerism both Root and Branch.

L O N D O N:

Printed for Richard Butler, next door to the Lamb
and Three Bowls in Barbican, 1676.

3.

A BRANCH OF QUAKERISM OUT OF VINDICATION

Our Common Custom of Naming the
Slaves and Months after their usual Names,
as well consistent with Scripture and sober Res-
on, and the Quakers Opinion and Practice in
the country proved to be Prejudicial above the
Rule, and their Zeal hereabout to be mistaken.

Wm. L. G. A further defence of the Peace and Liberty of the Quakers Faith.
We for that end have yielded this to the help of
to all the Church of Q. Wells Root and Branch.

LONDON:
Printed for Richard Barker, next door to the Temple
and John Bowyer, 1745.

*Concerning the naming of Months and Days,
whether it be lawful and convenient, all
things considered, to say January, Februa-
ry, &c. Monday, Tuesday, &c.*

IT is to be wished, that all such names as do any thing fa-
vour of Gentilism and Idolatry, if it might be, were abo-
lished. For, 1. We are commanded to shun all appea-
rance of evil, and to be perfect as our heavenly Father
is perfect, and to have no fellowship with the works of
darkness, and to be a holy and peculiar people unto God. 2. God
gave commandment to his people of old to destroy the Altars of the
Idolatrous Nations, and break down their Images, and cut down their
Groves, and burn their graven Images with fire, *Deut. 7. 5.* by which is
intimated that God would have no remnants of Idolatry left. 3. God
doth promise for his people, *Hos. 2. 17.* that he will take away the
names of *Baalim* out of their mouth, and they shall no more be remem-
bered by their name. 4. As these names of Days and Months among
us had a beginning, upon certain reasons, and now are turned into a
Custom: so where it is perceived that the Custom is inconvenient, it
may well be laid by upon good grounds, and the old Custom abolished,
and new names imposed, which in time would grow into a Custom al-
so, and being established upon more lasting reasons, there would be no
such cause to alter it. 5. The Law of Christian charity obligeth far,
and *Pauls* resolution was, if meat make my Brother to offend, I will
not eat meat while the world standeth, and it is likely that many may
be offended at the use of these names, whom charity obligeth us not to
offend, if superiour charity doth not necessitate us to do that which their
weakness will turn into an offence, through no fault of ours. So that it
is to be wished that these names of Days and Months were away, if it
could be conveniently.

But yet I cannot see that it is simply unlawful to use these names, and
that where the alteration or change cannot be obtained, and where there
is no danger of Idolatry, or others receiving infection, it may be law-

ful, and in some sort convenient to use the names in use. And this seems to be but safe in England, and the adjacent Nations and Churches.

1. I do not perceive, but that the Quakers themselves do hold it lawful to say, that day commonly called *Monday*, the Month commonly called *January*; now though this be not to express a naming of them by their names, yet it is *Witnessing* towards them, and if the one be totally unlawful, it will be hard to defend the other from all blame. I call it *Monday*, and you say, that day commonly called *Monday*, if I sin, do not you something favour my sin? do you sufficiently shun all appearance of the sin, and doth no speck or tincture of it cleave to you? I read in one, a Minister who wrote against the Quakers — the 1st day of the first Month (called *March*) Mr. Wigan's *Antichrist's Strong Hold* inserted, p. 2. and I think I have read the like in Quakers' *Writings*, and from their mouths have heard it.

2. We find that *Nebuchadnezzar* did impose the name of his Idol upon *Daniel*, *Dan.* 4. 8. It seems to be the speech of the King to *Daniel*, whose name was *Belshazzar*, according to the name of his God, *Dan.* 4. 26. he is called *Daniel*, whose name was *Belshazzar*; and chap. 18. 1. whose name was called *Belshazzar*. Now *Bel* from whom this name was taken was one of the Idols of *Babylon*, as may be seen, *Isa.* 46. 1. And the King confesseth the imposition to be upon *Daniel* after the name of his God, that is, of his Idol, and in honour of him: it being a note of power and favour to give new names, and a sign of honour and excellency to the person on whom they are conferred: as we read of *Abram* and *Sarai*, and *Jacob*, unto whom the Lord gave new names. So here the King to shew his Prerogative royal, and to honour his Idol God, and to add excellency to *Daniel*, as he thought, gave to *Daniel* a new name, *Belshazzar*, after the name of his Idol. Now 1. We do not find *Daniel* at all refusing this name, or protesting against it, or refusing to answer to it, and so when called by his name; yea we find him readily answering when called solely by this name, *Dan.* 4. 18, 19. 2. We find the Holy Ghost, or the Penman of the History of *Daniel* by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which is all one, calling and writing him *Daniel*, whose name was — and whose name was called *Belshazzar*, as chap. 2. 26. and 10. 1. and 4. 19. 3. Yea, we find the Holy Ghost himself recording and naming him by this very name, thus *Belshazzar* answered and said, *Dan.* 4. 19. whence I do gather these two things. 1. That by a comparison of these Texts, together there is no substantial difference between these two, *Belshazzar* and *Daniel*, whose

whose name was Bel, or whose name was called Belshazzar; and consequently between Monday, and the day called Monday. I do gather from the Scriptures naming him Belshazzar without any periphrasis or words of restraint, that it may be lawful in like cases to say Monday, Tuesday, Friday, or Marib-day, &c. I do not see but that the reason of both is the same, and that we have the warrant of the Spirit for such manner of speaking. 3. The Scripture useth an Idol-name by which a Ship was called, *Act. 28. 11.* The sign of the Ship was *Castor and Pollux*, two Heathenish Idols, or Demons, had in great veneration among the Gentiles, of whom there is frequent mention in Poets — *Bi fratrem Pollux altera morte redemit, Virg.* meaning that Pollux had to great a love for his Brother, that he gave his own life in ransom for him, and for their singular love to each other, and good will and service to Mariners, they were Canonized for Demons or Devils, and a Ship called by their name; and the Scripture here using the name freely, and without any offence. So the Holy Ghost calls him the Priest of *Jupiter, Act. 14. 13.* 4. Also we find the Holy Ghost calling the great Idol Goddess *Diana* by her proper name *Diana, Act. 19. 24.* an Idol fam'd and worshipped by all Asia and the World, having a most magnificent Temple built her, which, as the Story relates, was in its time one of the wonders of the world, v. 27. yet the Holy Ghost thought it no sin to call her by the common name. In a word, if it is ordinary in the Scriptures to call Idols by their proper names, as *Bel, Nebo*, the Idols of *Babylon, Isa. 45. 1.* in the house of *Nisroch* his God, *2 Kings 19. 37.* *Baal-zebub* the God of *Ekron, 2 Kings 1. 3, 8, 16.* the Prophets of *Baal, 1 Kings 18. 19.* *If Baal be God, serve him, v. 21.* Prophets of *Baal, v. 25.* 40. Every Nation made Gods of their own, *Succoth-benoth, Nergal, Ashtina, Nibbaz, Tarsak, Adrammelech, and Anammelech, Idol Gods, 1 King 17. 29, 33, 31.* Throw down the Altar of *Baal, Judg. 8. 25, 28.* 30. *Will ye plead for Baal? v. 31.* therefore he called *Gideon Jemabbal*, saying, *Let Baal plead against him, v. 32.* and the Holy Ghost mentions *Gideon* by his new name taken from *Baal, Judg. 7. 1.* The house of *Dagon*, and set it by *Dagon, 1 Sam. 5. 2.* and v. 3, 4, 5, 7. *Dagon* is named by all which, and many such places it is evident that it is familiar with the Scriptures to speak of Idols after the common manner, and why it should not be as lawful to say Monday, Tuesday, &c. as to say the house of *Dagon*, the Prophets of *Baal*, I know not.

They who would make it sinful must produce some Law, no Law can be produced making it simply unlawful; no Law in Scripture forbids

bids it as a thing altogether sinful. Nature's Law forbids nothing but what is against piety towards God, or justice and charity towards our Neighbour.

I confess it may be against charity in certain cases, as where by our using this kind of speech any weak persons will take offence, if we know such, and no necessity lye upon us to use the common speech, we may do well for charity sake to speak in their own phrase : but out of such case, and where no scandal can happen to any, it can be no breach of charity.

I do also confess that if we liv'd among Heathens, who should use the same names with us, and acknowledg them to be the names of their Gods or Idols, and so should make an ill use of our practice, as if we did in some things approve of Ethnicism and Paganish Rites and Customs, and should urge this upon us, If you renounce our Gods and our Religion, why do you at all retain their Names, and why do you continue to call your Days and Months by Idol-names? In such case there might far more be said against the use of these names, *Monday, Saturday, &c.* and the practice might prove hardning to such neighbour Idolaters, and far more inconvenient than now it is among us. For now by long use and Custom, and the purity of the Gospel among us, all Superstition and Idolatry in this point is abolished, and we do use these names in no other sense but as distinguishing signs whereby to know one day from another : We do utterly renounce all Idolatry and compliance with Paganism in any thing unlawful, and thousands which use these names use them by tradition from their Parents and common usage and custom, not knowing any reason against them, nor once imagining that these names be originally from Paganism and Idolatry, and to them they are no more harmful than any other word, because they understand nothing of the rise and first imposition of them. And some perhaps there are which may give a tolerable construction of them, or some of them at least, as *August, July*, so called, as most think in memory of *Julius Caesar* and *Augustus Caesar*, Pagan Roman Emperors. But admit the worst, and that all the names of the days and months in use among us, are originally Idol-names, it is proved before that the speech is lawful, which I do further confirm by these two or three reasons.

1. The great Law of speech is Use and Custom, and where once a name or imposition is fixed and settled by custom, it gaineth law and warrant by that; and this is clear both from Scripture and the observation and practice of all Nations. There may be many a name or word

use among us, whose origin and first beginning, if we did but know it, might be found to be worse than any of these names of days and months: but time and universal custom and usage have a great force in such cases, and that which at the beginning was evil by long use becomes harmless, and all because use and tradition are the great arbiters of speech; and we see in our Nation how our speech doth much differ from what was in use some hundred years ago, as may appear by comparing Chaucer and other ancient Writers with those of this Age, and so it is in most languages.

2. As it is a sin to excuse sin, so it is a sin to make sin where God makes none. There is sin enough, we need not to add to Gods Law and make more.

Object. You will say it is a shew or appearance of evil, and we are bound to shun all appearance of evil.

Ans. This precept of shunning all appearance of evil is of large extent, and had need of wary construction. Many things are rightly and duly done, which yet to such as do not know the whole matter have very great appearance of evil. But as one faith of error, almost an error is a truth, so almost an evil is not evil. I could give many instances which have great shew of evil, which yet a sober and right impartial man having the whole cause to judge on would pronounce to be laudable and good; for circumstances may so drive a man, as that he shall be constrained to go near the borders of vice, and yet neither commit it, nor consent to it, nor be justly taxable so have been too venturous. It may happen that prudence and charity, and Christian necessity shall compel a man to go to the utmost verge of liberty and lawfulness, which in other circumstances would be sin, and a scolding of God. And there is no such appearance of evil in this case of saying *Monday, Tuesday, &c.* but what is defensible and lawful, arising where preponderating accidents do make it unlawful.

As to that Scripture in *Hos. 2. 17. I will take away the names of Baalim out of their mouth.* By it can be meant no more than the sinful and corrupt use of them, that they should not own them, and any way honour and worship them, nor be any way accessory to their service, nor should use their names corruptly and without due cause: All this may be, and yet there may be an innocent use of the name or word.

3. We must be able in disputation or discourse solidly to convince an Heathen or gainsayer, that it is sinful to use these names, or he will think we place Religion in names and words. We must produce him some Law of God making it sinful. Whatsoever Law shall be found in Scripture which seems to be against it, must be either positive or natural. A positive precept I call which hath no other reason but the Commanders will, and was not known, nor was any duty till given forth, such as Circumcision, the Passover, and the two Sacraments. It is evident there is no such Precept in Scripture forbidding us to call Days and Months by these or other such names.

If any precept be against it, it must be a natural precept, such as is expressive of the Law of Nature, and which would have been a sin if that Precept had not been writ. Now the Law of Nature, or right reason doth not forbid any thing as simply unlawful that is not so. Now right reason cannot discern that it is simply unlawfull to call the first day of the week *Sunday*, the second *Monday, &c.* there is no intrinsic evil or turpitude in it. All that can be said against it is, but that it is inconvenient, and so far it must be acknowledged to be unlawful.

But then it is to be considered that what is inconvenient in some respects, may be convenient in other respects, and so the question turns upon this, whether all things considered

considered more and more, is almost convenient in relation of the Quakers to leave off the usual names of Days and Months among us, or so keep to them. I think generally, and for the most part, it is more convenient to keep to them both speaking and writing.

1. We are not to make sin and duty where God makes none, and conformity to a part from the place in which we live in such customs and practices as be harmless and lawful in themselves.

2. Custom and sound Doctrine have long since taken away all impurity from the names, so that to the pure these and all such things are pure.

3. The generality of those which be nice, and precise this way, accounting it sin to name the Days and Months by these names, do seem to be unequally precise, precise in a small matter, and little precise in many far more weighty matters, straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel. The main body (I think) of humble, conscientious, and pious persons are well satisfied of the lawfulness of using these names, and the practice of those that are contrary-minded, shows small encouragement, so to count them in this.

4. Proud singularity and superstition in practice is, an old and common trick of Satan, which many do signorantly run into, conceiving they do best when indeed they serve Satan, trouble both themselves and others, and would get themselves a name, and be accounted precise and strict, upon the account of some groundless singularity, which their superstition makes a great piece of holiness, and makes them believe others to be very blind, and unclean.

If any out of conscience think and practise otherwise, let them be peaceable and charitable, forbearing rash censuring, and not imposing their opinion as a Law upon others, nor hotly contending for it, and troubling the Church; and they are free for me to use what names they will. In such cases be charitable and peaceable, and we shall do well.

I Expect to be censured for these Endeavours about such manner things, I am contented for by the censure and judgment of men better than my self. I do much reverence, and if they shall judge me, I shall take part with them, and condemn my self, provided they judge impartially, and upon the whole manner. Such a one has made himself busy with such small things, and thinks it his beside his trade and main scope to make these smaller matters objects of strife and debate. Diseases cannot be cured but by suitable Remedies, and a tender and wise Physician will condescend to suffer as well as grow a Cure.

September 13. 1676

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